

/198 cont./

423 peculiar character of the returns effected by the owners on the  
 794 occasion of feasts, offerings, visits. The money is shuffled here,  
 (452) and the investment relatively large. The budget of the group is  
 credit. Whence purchases far away in the plain, which correla-  
 tively led to the abandonment of the high terraces and a certain  
 decadence of the montagnard cultivations. But that is a matter  
 of a late evolution. Let us not stop there.

423 At present, three ikhs-s, a. H'ammo, a. Lh'sen, a. Ali,  
 613 are distributed in these quarters according to a sampling all the  
 592 more complicated because they include nearly 40 foyers having  
 rights, that is:

|                     |                  |             |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------|
| a. H'ammo. . . . .  | 22 having rights | 357 parcels |
| a. Lh'sen . . . . . | 10 --            | 105 --      |
| a. Ali . . . . .    | 7 --             | 65 --       |

Inequality among the ikhs-s: the a. Lh'sen and the a. Ali  
 each have no more than a few foyers: curse of the saint. Besides,  
 the a. Ali have alienated many of their portions: economic ex-  
 pression of their spiritual discredit. The inequality between  
 owners can go from the simple to twentyfold. Seven owners by  
 themselves alone own nearly half of the total number of parcels.  
 But the distribution of the ikhs-s, and even of many families of  
 each ikhs, over the ensemble of the quarters is nonetheless the  
 rule. Thus, on the 29 parcels that make up the quarter of Imi  
 n-Zennu, one finds:

|                     |                         |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| a. Ali . . . . .    | 2 having rights         | 2 parcels         |
| a. Lh'sen . . . . . | 8 --                    | 12 --             |
| a. H'ammo. . . . .  | 10 --                   | 15 --             |
|                     | <u>20 having rights</u> | <u>29 parcels</u> |

312 In what concerns the irrigation, one witnesses here the phe-  
 423 nomenon of rupture of the gentilitial order that has already been  
 178 observed at Ad'erd'ur. For /199/ several years, the irrigation has  
 613 been done s-igd'ar or s-tghuma, "by sluices." That is to say, by  
 ensembles of continuous parcels. By pieces of land, and not by

/277 cont./

the usual procedure of these obligations of group to patron. Such testimony is rare: the beneficiaries keep them secret (2).

2. We have been able, however, to procure for ourselves at the zaouia of the Mez'ud'a one of these acts, which we reproduce as Figure 10, page 390.

Perhaps even many of these contracts are pure etiology of a custom in being and for which one should have tried to place the origin and to find the explanation.

Let us pass now to a second element of institutions: these māruḥ-s of which there has already been mention many times. This word, used here rather than that of mussem, has been attested since an ancient epoch and paradoxically combines the Koranic notion of "good" and that of "customary usage." Veritable play on words, which seems intended, since a number of customary codifications have feigned to be based on it and sometimes even yet it is invoked by /278/ /Fig. 10 appears here/ /279/ innovating jurists. The māruḥ is the seasonal rite incumbent on a group with regard to a saint. It usually includes a blood sacrifice, tighersi, but differs from other gatherings, such as the tinubga or tiwilt, which have no religious import. The chichard is found in the old acts in the form of testamentary prescriptions, accompanied by invocations and conditional curses: last words of the dying saint to his servants. Sometimes accompanied by homilies, it constitutes, for multiseccular lapses, the charter regulating the relations of a group with the local representative of the sacred.

Several saints possess an estate, rras l-māl, maintained from year to year by the sale of pieces of meat. This sale is done at auctions. It releases the emulation, itself ostentation, which this kind of concourse calls up. But the money owed is almost never demandable until the following year. An embryo of credit thus forces its way through. It includes inscription on written rolls and the montagnard notariate is actively occupied with it. Elsewhere we have described the demarcations between the profane

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 391]